

From: Anglican Diocese of Toronto
To: cw-stgeorgememorialoshawa@toronto.anglican.ca
Subject: Letter to the Diocese from Bishop Andrew, Friday March 20
Date: Friday, March 20, 2020 5:03:43 PM



Diocese of Toronto

Anglican Church of Canada

Dear Friends in Christ,

I recently took part in a meeting on Zoom, the online platform that so many of us are now using. Before the meeting started, we shared stories about what was going on in our lives and our church communities. The stories and observations were insightful, inspiring – and yes, humorous. They helped to bring us together and alleviate some of the pressure we were all under.

In the spirit of those conversations and so many others I have been having with people across our Diocese, I plan to begin communicating to you on a regular basis, beginning with this letter. I will be sending you an email each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, containing the latest updates about how our Diocese is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also include inspiring stories from our parishes, of which there are many.

In this first letter, I'd like to highlight some important initiatives that are underway in our Diocese.

A few days ago, our Executive Director, Robert Saffrey, circulated a financial worksheet to gather information from parishes. This was done so that we could analyze our financial forecasts and seek ways of offering help and guidance for parishes. With your input and suggestions, a financial update and plan will be available to me and your area bishops by Wednesday, March 25. I will keep you updated on this in my letter.

On March 18, the Government of Canada announced some financial support for businesses and non-profits facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these initiatives include increasing the availability of credit to businesses of all sizes, sustaining liquidity in key financial markets, and providing flexibility to businesses experiencing hardship. Having

said that, the eligibility criteria, details and application process of some of these programs have not yet been released. We continue to monitor the situation and will advise as information continues to be released. Please see the government links below for additional information. We would encourage you to monitor these sites: [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#); [Prime Minister announces more support for workers and businesses](#). Please don't hesitate to contact any member of the HR team for any questions or issues.

As we have previously communicated, we have initiated our “work from home protocols” at the Diocesan Centre and all staff have begun working from home effective March 16 and will continue to provide service to you remotely. They are working very hard under challenging circumstances to continue to provide support to you and to our operations. I wish to thank them for their commitment and diligence to our Diocese under extraordinary circumstances. It is very much appreciated.

Your area bishops and I are inviting all people in the Diocese to a day of prayer and fasting on Thursday, March 26. Resources, including suggestions of prayers to use throughout the day, will be made available on Monday. Archbishop Linda Nicholls has also called all Canadian Anglicans to a day of prayer on Sunday, March 29. Let us take every opportunity to pray for one another, and for our world, during this difficult time.

Last but not least, I invite you to church. Our cathedral will continue to share a service online each Sunday morning, as will other churches across our Diocese. A list of communities offering these online services is on the website. If you and your parish are providing online worship, please let us know so that we can include you in this list.

See you on Monday!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Andrew Toronto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. Andrew Asbil
Bishop of Toronto